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Public Information Statement, Comments Requested
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
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From: Mary Mullusky
Chief, Water Resources Services Branch

Subject: Soliciting comments on proposed expansion of NWS
Support for Multi-Agency Runoff Risk Forecasts through
December 15, 2015

The National Weather Service (NWS) is seeking feedback on the proposed expansion of NWS Support for Multi-Agency Runoff Risk Forecasts through December 15, 2015.

NWS's North Central River Forecast Center (NCRFC) has been exploring usability of NWS river forecast model soil moisture model output for applications beyond river flood forecasting. In meeting its hydrologic forecast responsibilities to protect life and property and to enhance the Nation's economy, the NWS's River Forecast Centers (RFCs) continuously simulate, in time and space, moisture within the soil column using the Sacramento Soil Moisture Accounting model.

The NCRFC was approached by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) to explore the usability of NWS hydrologic models to stratify the risk of significant forecast runoff from rain or snowmelt. The development and implementation of runoff risk forecasts has been a multi-agency collaborative effort involving many federal and state agencies and academia. Increased awareness of runoff risk in nutrient application timing could decrease nutrient transport, a significant factor in water quality in many streams, lakes, shallow wells, as well as fueling hypoxic zones and harmful algal blooms in the Great Lakes, Gulf of Mexico and other regions around the country. Such a capability has the potential to enhance the utility of ongoing NOAA efforts to develop an ecological forecasting capability to address these and other nutrient-affected issues as well as state- and local-level nutrient management efforts.

The successful implementation of the runoff risk forecasts in Wisconsin has generated attention from other states interested

in a similar NWS partnership. The NWS is proposing expansion of support for these multi-agency runoff risk tools in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan and Ohio through federal, state and academic collaboration. Expansion to the remaining Great Lakes states and many other states has been requested following the states mentioned above.

NWS's proposed expansion of support for Runoff Risk Forecasts is expected to further NOAA's collaboration on multi-agency efforts to ensure safe water quality and healthy ecosystems in the nation's streams, lakes and coastal waters. More details about this proposal can be found at Proposal for NOAA/NWS Expansion of the Multi-Agency Runoff Risk Forecasts

Comments on this proposed effort by NWS may be provided by December 15, 2015, to:

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Questions about RRAF development efforts may be directed to:

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